The Unitarian Calendar

"To live without feeling or exciting sympathy, to be fortunate without adding to the felicity of others, or afflicted without tasting the balm of pity, is a state more gloomy than solitude."

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

Vol. 5 APRIL — 1913 No. 8

OUR NATIONAL SOCIETIES

With headquarters in the building of the American Unitarian Association, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Local offices at 104 East 20th Street, New York City; 105 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill., and 376 Sutter Street, San Francisco, Cal.

THE AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION

Founded in 1825.

The chief missionary organization of the Unitarian churches of America. It supports missionaries, establishes and maintains churches, holds conventions, aids in building meeting-houses, publishes books, tracts, and devotional works.

Address correspondence to the Secretary Rev. Lewis G. Wilson.

Address contributions to the Treasurer, Henry M. Williams.

UNITARIAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL SOCIETY

Founded in 1827.

Incorporated in 1885. The active work of the Society is carried on by the Department of Religious Education of the American Unitarian Association.

President, Rev. William I. Lawrance.

Treasurer, Mr. Sanford Bates.

NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF UNITARIAN WOMEN

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Promotes the local organization of the women of the Unitarian churches for missionary and denominational work.

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Promotes an increasing participation in the works of the local churches and in the affairs of the denomination at large.

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Address correspondence to the Secretary and Treasurer, Mr. Cyril H. Burdett, 135 Broadway, New York City.

The Unitarian Calendar

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THE SENSE OF SIN

BY REV. E. FREEMAN

I am strongly inclined to hold that the ordinary man is not a sinner in the sense that he has so often been described, and that he is not conscious of being a sinner. The sense of sin, upon the existence of which certain theologians place so much value, is very often the product of an emotional evangelism, the moral worth of which frequently needs more demonstration than it gets. Your average decent, respectable man does not go about the world breaking down divine commands for the mere fun of the thing and flinging defiance in the teeth of Deity. The great problem of his life, generally speaking, is to distinguish between right and wrong in the complex issues by which he is so often faced in modern life. He wants to do the right thing as far as he can—his difficulty is in settling what the right thing is at any given moment of crisis. At least half of his "sins" would be more rightly named mistakes.

I do not want to whitewash wrongdoing for a moment, or deny that it exists. There is a great deal of wrongdoing—and very culpable wrongdoing—in the world. But I dare say as much of it is done by the pious saints of theology as by men outside the theological pale and labelled by theologians as sinners. I sometimes get sick to death of all the nebulous cant that is prated about sin by men who would wear the knees of their trousers out in praying for light and courage before they would dare attack positive sins that

are constantly under their noses. However heinous sin may be—when it is actually wilful wrongdoing—it does not explain the whole of human life and experience, and we have no right to allow it to warp and bias our judgment of the fundamental character of human nature. No man is a sinner all the time. Even the worst man is an actual sinner a very small part of his time. His sins at the worst are dark episodes in his life—they are not the check in the pattern of his complete life.

It might also, I think, be further argued against the theological assertion of the universality of the sense of sin, that if the sense of sin were universal, there would also be a general recognition of and agreement as to what sin is. It is all very well for the theologian to argue that the sense of sin is something common both to the life of the modern world and to the life, let us say, of ancient Greece and Rome. But I think he would find it an exceedingly difficult matter to prove that it was produced in the same way as the result of a common standard of what sin is; and, if that cannot be proved, then I am afraid the argument loses a great deal of weight, and the way is open for an explanation of the sense of sin which constitutes a serious challenge to the theological theory. We will leave that point, however aside.

What I want to emphasize at the moment is that hitherto in our theological thought it has always been assumed that the sense of sin or moral imperfection is the proof of a certain fundamental badness and wrong in human nature. As pain is the proof of disease in the body, so it has been held, the sense of sin and guilt is the proof of disease in the soul. In other words, that man is conscious of the sense of sin is held to be proof that in some radical way he is the opposite of what he ought to be. Well, now, I am not at

all sure that this is so. And I want to suggest that the sense of sin is the proof, not of the inherent badness of men, but of their inherent goodness—the proof, not that man is the opposite of what he ought to be, but that he is in the true line of his natural progression; not that he is a fallen creature, but that he is an ascending creature. In a word, that the sense of sin in reality is an essential factor in the moral progress of the human race.

OUR BUSINESS

BY REV. ARTHUR L. WEATHERLY

Of All Souls' Church, Lincoln, Nebraska

The recognition of the value of an ideal slowly penetrates the minds of men. The many still seek some form of compulsion in order to induce or compel others to be what they want them to be. In spite of the teachings of Jesus, Christians rush to Legislatures with all sorts of plans for legislation to make people moral or go to the penitentiary. It is because we do not grasp the persuasive power of the truth, the tide-like irresistiveness of the ideal, that we in our petty haste seek to force others to act as we would have them act.

Once men sought by force to compel men to believe. We have learned the futility of force in this respect. Galileos might be made to recant, but they still would murmur, "But it does move." It is as impossible to compel men to be moral by law as to make them believe by law. Some laws are necessary which protect the weak. Some are needed for those who are unfit to live in an organized society. But at the most these can only compel the outward appearance. The making of an action a crime by law which is not a crime in

itself, expresses all too often the lack of faith on the part of those who advocate it.

The challenge of the present to all souls is one which demands faith in the triumph of the ideal. Let it be seen, then it by its own inherent attractiveness will draw all men unto it. The heat of the light which shines from it will warm the hearts of men. Those who have won intellectual freedom must now win for themselves and the coming generations moral freedom. The persistent teaching of the highest ideals, not the inculcation of fear, will be the most potent factor in developing the sanctity and beauty of the home. A high ideal of motherhood will enshrine in the hearts of boys and men a respect for womanhood that will be far more potent than all the penalties heaped upon the transgressor. The growth in a boy of the ideal he seeks to realize is more effective in making him a good citizen and a useful man than all the punishments that man can devise. Our business is to hold before all men the highest ideals, in firm confidence that these will in "His good time" prevail.

I will give place to no man in my faith that every day is the Lord's day; that work well done is also worship; that the ring of the hammer is as sacred as the striking of the harp; the hum of honest industry as the psalms of the sanctuary; and the long strain of the week-day burden as the Sabbath rest and prayer. Every word of this is true; but then for that reason I must be in the spirit on the Lord's Day as I am also in the week-day, and if I deem work as sacred as worship the canon holds good again I must deem worship as sacred as work.

—*Robert Collyer.*

"THE PROVIDENTIAL IMPULSE"

Dr. Frederick Henry Hedge, in 1878, in his essay entitled "The Way of History," makes the following remarkable statement:

"The civil and political life of nations, so long as they preserve their independence, assumes successively four different forms of government. The theocratic age produces domestic monarchy (patriarchism). The heroic produces aristocracy, or the government of the city, limiting the abuse of power. Then comes democracy, founded on the idea of natural equality. And lastly despotism, or imperial rule, establishes itself on the ruins of democracy, and puts an end to the anarchy and public corruption to which popular governments give rise. Or, if that remedy fails, the degenerate nation, given over to anarchy and corruption, becomes the prey of the spoiler, and succumbs to a foreign yoke. When a nation, or when a society has passed through these stages, and unreclaimed by the revolutions it has experienced still continues to decline and degenerate, it passes at last into a second barbarism. Faith expires, religion languishes, men grow brutal, cities decay, society becomes effete and lies supine until regenerated by *some providential impulse from without.*"

The foregoing course of growth and degeneration which has so frequently taken place in ages past we have no reason to suppose will be prevented in time to come unless, by a self-control far more intelligent than the earlier nations practiced, the elements of corruption are forestalled. And how are they to be forestalled? Plainly, by the recognition and application to the needs of society of a genuine providential impulse from without. It is curious that democracy should be followed by despotism or imperial rule. It is still more remarkable that, failing despotism and imperial rule, any modern nation should decline until it passes into a second barbarism.

And yet, if such degeneration is attended by the extinction of faith, the languishing of religion, the decadence of cities, and the increase of brutality among the people, it would seem that modern democracy contains all the germs of such degeneration.

Fortunately, however, Dr. Hedge pointed out that there was such a thing as a "providential impulse from without" which had repeatedly in times past regenerated decadent society. In the lectures which Prof. Rudolf Eucken has recently been giving, what many people believe to be the most significant feature of his philosophy is his emphasis of that very same thing. He teaches that into the individual and into society may come, when needed, regenerating spiritual forces, and that in modern commercialism, degeneracy, and corruption he discerned evidences of an inflowing of providential impulses. And why not? Why should not every church in the civilized world to-day recognize the fact that this is God's world, as well as man's world, and that there is no immunity from decay and death except by keeping open the avenues of communion and intercommunion between the human and the divine? And how can those avenues be kept open by the various churches of the land better than by intelligent and properly conducted worship? We do not, of course, mean by this a servile attitude towards deity. We mean simply that in an intelligent recognition of the fact that this is God's world he can have free course through the minds and hearts and hands of the people and can accomplish desired results. Human society cannot be explained except by the recognition of that which is higher than itself. There is no essential sovereignty in humanity. This world does not account for itself. It is only by a frank acceptance of a "divinity that shapes our ends" that we can feel the full measure of destiny.

UNITARIANISM A LEAVENING FAITH

REV. E. A. COIL

Of the First Unitarian Society, Marietta, Ohio

A few years ago I attended a Sunday School meeting in which, because of my being a known Unitarian, I was not allowed any part except as an interested listener. The speaker of the occasion, whom I was most anxious to hear, took as a text for his address a quotation from the writings of James Russell Lowell. During the address he quoted freely from Emerson, Longfellow and Bryant; but never once from any prominent writer of an orthodox church. After the meeting was over I remarked to one who had participated in it: "You may deny me the privilege of speaking from your platform; but if you keep on allowing Lowell, Emerson, Longfellow, Bryant and other prominent Unitarians to be heard there, you will all come to be Unitarians before you are aware of the radical change that is taking place in your thought." That Unitarianism has come to be a great leavening power working in all churches, people, claiming to be orthodox, now freely admit, and this is one of the ways in which it has so impressed itself upon our age.

And what does this change mean for Christendom? It means the acceptance of that conception of God and his relation to humanity embodied in the parable of the prodigal son as against a being such as the historic creeds set forth. The parable does not represent God as filled with wrath, and demanding the shedding of innocent blood as a prerequisite to his granting forgiveness and receiving his penitent children back into the home for which, sooner or later, all wanderers come to long. Since Unitarianism declares that salvation is by character, this change

also means hope for the penitent and righteous anywhere in all the world as against the idea of a partial salvation, possible only to the favored few who happen to be taught the correct creed. It means an earnest effort to solve all great world problems, and the setting up of the kingdom of heaven among men on the basis of the universal fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, as against the old methods which sought only individual salvation, because they were based on the thought that at the very best only a few could be saved from the universal wreck occasioned by what is called original sin. It means destroying that sectarianism that has caused so much bitterness and bloodshed, and still does. Rather than that I should write or teach anything that would hinder this great leavening process, and strengthen the old walls of sectarianism and exclusiveness, "may my right hand forget its cunning, and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth."

But even if I should, in blindness, write or teach something that would hinder the great leavening process now going on, it would not stop it. Proclaimed, as it is being proclaimed, in the best prose and poetry of our day, in spite of all endeavors to suppress or stop it:

"From hand to hand our message flows,
From eye to eye the signals run,
From heart to heart the bright hope glows;
The seekers of the light are one.
"One in the freedom of the truth,
One in the joy of paths untrod,
One in the soul's perennial youth,
One in the nobler thought of God."

PROPHECY AND PROPHETS

REV. AUGUSTUS M. LORD, D. D.

Of the First Congregational Church of Providence, R. I.

I think it was when Grant was before Vicksburg that the Confederates shifted commanders, and at once with a very small force of men Grant, who had hitherto moved cautiously, proceeded to storm an important position.

Meeting Grant after the war the superseded Confederate commander said to him, "If I had remained in command you would never have taken that position." "If you had remained in command," answered Grant, "I should never have attempted to take it. I knew the weak points of your successor. He was a classmate of mine at West Point."

And what is true of war and warriors and war times is true also of prophecy and prophets, and times that develop prophecy and prophets, times of community building, of the settling of racial traits, and the determining of national destinies.

The true prophets, the great prophets, of Israel, as of any other nation, did not foresee events by any process of miraculous super-sense, they were primarily men of insight, clear-eyed seers of the human circumstance of the times in which they lived, good judges of the men, of the people, the folks, who were the nation in the making. And by the exercise of consecrated common sense they could tell pretty accurately the kind of nation and the kind of national life that would be made out of that kind of material.

The so-called blessing of Jacob is pre-eminently a prophecy of that type; the refreshingly frank, sharply outlined deliverance of an excellent judge of men.

He is not talking about future events, but about tendencies of character which shall determine the nature of the effect of every event on a

given temperament; events, circumstances, whatever happens, can move only in a particular channel, and fertilize or devastate a particular province in each separate soul. It is the same air and sunshine, the same dust and dew, the same seas and stars, that are mingled in different measure in the oak of a hundred years and the flower of the field which to-day is and to-morrow is cast into the oven, in the lowering tempest and the golden gates of sunset.

UNITARIAN HYMN

Softly the silent night,
  Falleth from God,
On weary wanderers
  Over life's road;
And as the stars on high
Light up the darkening sky,
Lord, unto Thee we cry,—
  Father above!

Slowly on failing wing
  Daylight has passed;
Sleep, like an angel kind,
  Folds us at last.
Peace be our lot this night,
Safe be our slumber light,
Watched by Thine angels bright,
  Father above!

And when the gleam of morn
  Touches our eyes,
And the returning day
  Bids us arise,—
Happy beneath Thy will,
Steadfast in joy or ill,
Lord, may we serve Thee still,
  Father above!

— *Ambrose Nichols Blatchford.*

LEADERSHIP IN SOCIAL SERVICE

It is easy to show by illustrations from contemporary life that the great problems of our time are social problems, that the responsibility for their right solution is personal and that no man can escape his obligations any more than he can escape from the society of which he is a member. It is a matter of tremendous concern that these questions shall be settled wisely and fairly and with absolute justice to all. Strange theories are winning their way, Socialism is captivating many minds and hearts and is becoming to them not only a political but a religious creed; and is not this due, in a measure at least, to the selfishness of some of those who hold the reins of power, and to their indifference to the wrongs and sufferings of the helpless millions?

So it would appear to those who are somewhat familiar with the current opinion of the time, and there is a call to-day for generous and sympathetic leadership, for men of vision who can see life in its larger relations; who in business will have a higher regard for men than for profits, who in legislatures will place the public good above private consideration, who in whatever station in life it shall please God to call them will see to it that even-handed justice is done.

This demand is a clarion call to the church. The church to-day stands at the parting of the ways; and by the church I do not mean the ministers, I do not mean the local organizations, I mean the great company of faithful men and women who call themselves Christians, followers and disciples of Jesus Christ. They are the church. If the church receives honor and praise, it is because they have proved themselves worthy of the name of Christian; if it is regarded with indifference, if it is reproached for its worldliness and its shortcomings, and this reproach is

just, it is because its members have failed to be true to their Master.

The sad thing is that in the minds of many thoughtful people the reproach *is* just, and perhaps we have felt the force of it ourselves, but even so, a sweeping indictment cannot lie against the whole membership of the church. It is still true that a great part of the conscience of the community is in the church, the very fact that the sharpest critics of the inconsistencies of Christian churchmen are themselves members of the church proves that. It is equally true that a very large part of the intelligence and energy of the community is also in the church. Now you have but to put this trained intelligence and this sensitive conscience together, and you have a combination which insures that leadership in the great developing processes of society will pass to the church, which insures that it shall be Christian and devoted to the highest service of all the people.

Many leaders there have been and are who have seen the glory of this ideal. To make no distinction among the living, I may without fear of contradiction name as one such leader the late William H. Baldwin, Jr., president of the Long Island Railroad. "His whole idea of the railroad was to develop it in the interest of everybody along the route," says his biographer. "Its prosperity was to be the common prosperity. It was to make life easier for the farmer, to cheapen products for the consumer, to assist in the distribution of congested city populations and the public should have the benefit after a generous return is made on the actual expenditure."

His door was always open to the humblest employee on his road, and he had the absolute confidence of his men. "In a case of proposed railroad extension, he was asked as an official to take advantage of plans then secret and buy cer-

tain properties. He considered it, but refused. "I could have made a pot of money out of that," he said, "but I should have sold too much of myself."

This is the type of service and leadership in service for which the world is calling. Is the Christian Church in the persons of its members ready to listen to the call and make the sacrifices which the call demands? According to the answer which shall be made by the intelligence and the wealth and the conscience which call themselves Christian will the church accept and make its own this opportunity of the ages, or throw it away forever.

—Rev. Elmer S. Forbes.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION BULLETINS

Among other methods of increasing interest and promoting efficiency in the work of our Sunday schools, the Department of Religious Education plans to issue, at frequent intervals, bulletins which will contain helpful suggestions to superintendents and teachers. The first of these bulletins has been prepared by Rev. William I. Lawrance, the Secretary of the Department, and deals with the grading of schools. It bears the title of "How to Organize the Sunday School for More Efficient Instruction." Another has been prepared by Prof. Edwin D. Starbuck, the well-known psychologist, who is now serving the Department in the capacity of lecturer. In this bulletin, which is entitled "Religious Education in the New World-View," Dr. Starbuck lays emphasis upon the importance of early religious training in the achievement of the great end of all religious instruction,—the making of religious citizens. These bulletins are published for free distribution and may be obtained in any quantity on application to the Department of Religious Education.

NEWS NOTES

"Pleasant Sunday Evenings" is the name given by the Bulfinch Place Church ("The Little Church on the Corner") to services which are held every Sunday evening at 7.30 o'clock. The program of each service is especially interesting not only on account of the service itself, which generally contains an address by some visiting minister or some musical numbers by leading musicians, but also on account of the neighborhood feeling which is developed. The Bulfinch Place Church exerts an influence over a wide area on the West Side.

Rev. Margaret B. Barnard of Rowe, Mass., recently made an extended visit in the South from which reports have constantly arrived at headquarters. She delivered an inspiring sermon before the newly gathered congregation at Norfolk, Va., upon "Success From Failure."

At the board meeting of the Conference of the Middle States and Canada Rev. F. M. Bennett of Salt Lake City was elected Field Agent, and is to begin work on September 1, 1913. He will work in co-operation with Rev. Leon A. Harvey, the Secretary of the Conference.

The Unitarian Club of Boston has adopted an excellent plan for increasing the interest in denominational matters. Frequently someone connected with the American Unitarian Association will give an account of some phase of the Association's work. By this method the knowledge of the members will be enriched, and through such knowledge there cannot fail to be an increase of interest in everything relating to the propagation of our faith.

The Minister's Class in Philosophy of Religion connected with the church in Berkeley, Cal., has undertaken an arduous task. It is to engage in "A Critical Reading of Bergson's Creative Evolution."

Rev. Thomas P. Byrnes of Erie, Pa., recently addressed an audience of twelve hundred people. It is reported that many men came who commented thoughtfully upon Unitarianism as they left. Mr. Byrnes is doing a good work in his city.

On March 11th Florence Khanon, wife of the Persian *charge d'affaires* at Washington, lectured before the Unity Club of Channing Memorial Church, Newport; and Milton W. Franklin of Schenectady entertained the club at its dinner with an address upon "European History and the Balkan Situation."

A unique feature characterized the service on March 16th at the Unitarian church in Toledo. It was called "Bryan Sunday." The members of the Bryan congregation, which Mr. MacIlwain visits Sunday afternoons, chartered a special car and attended the church at Toledo. These visitors from the Bryan congregation were entertained at the Boody House for dinner.

After a pastorate of seven years, Rev. Frank L. Phalen of Fairhaven has resigned. In his letter of resignation Mr. Phalen uses the following words: "My health has not been good for some time. After the Spanish War I suffered a long illness, and though I regained my health for the time, for the last two years I have really not been equal to the work." Mr. Phalen contemplates an extended period of rest and recreation

in England after the expiration of his pastorate on May 1st.

It is good to learn that at Hood River, Ore., where the Rev. H. A. McDonald has been settled for several years, a society of the Young People's Union has been organized.

A perfectly delightful little tract, entitled "A Reply to the Groundless Claim 'Unitarianism a Dying Church.' What Are the Facts?" has been issued by the First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh. The tract is a concise and pungent statement of the actual growth of Unitarianism, organized and unorganized. These tracts can be secured by addressing the Women's Alliance of the First Unitarian Church, Pittsburgh, Pa.

The Southern churches have this year received large encouragement and strength from a considerable number of visitors from the North. Among them are Rev. William I. Lawrance, Rev. Alfred Manchester, Rev. Margaret Barnard, Mrs. Mary P. Wells Smith and others, and returning reports indicate that our cause was never stronger than at the present time.

The Rev. Hilary Bygrave will make a visit to the newly organized church at Montego Bay, Jamaica. Mr. Bygrave will spend a week in Montego Bay, and considerable time also at other points on the island where Unitarian influence has been established.

The UNITARIAN CALENDAR is published monthly, except July and August, by the American Unitarian Association, at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Annual subscription, 25 cents.

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By THOMAS VAN NESS

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